

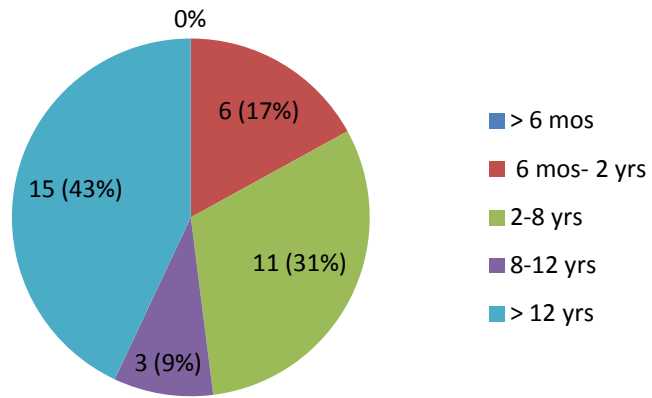
## **Eastown Business District Reponses to Uptown Marketing Study**

In the first quarter of 2017, Uptown collaborated with Calvin College to conduct marketing research for the district. The students surveyed Uptown business owners and area residents about their perceptions of Uptown, its greatest assets, challenges and recommendations for improvements. Over 260 area residents (Heritage Hill, Midtown, East Hills, Baxter and Eastown) and 134 business owners responded to the surveys. This report contains the survey responses from the 35 Eastown business owners answering questions regarding their own business district. A more detailed analysis of all survey responses will be completed by early October and sent out to all Uptown businesses.

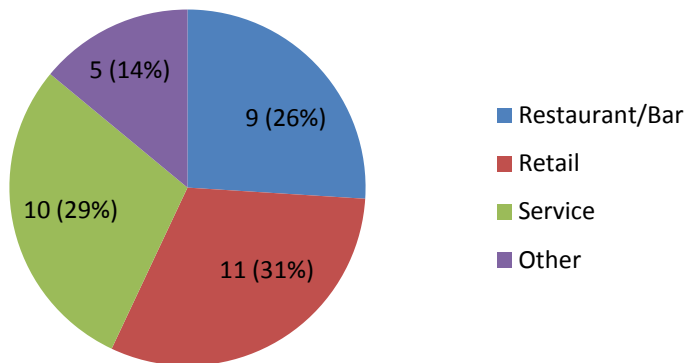
### **Highlights**

- 35 Eastown business owners responded to the survey.
- 74% of all respondents stated their business is performing either “*Well*” or “*Very Well*.”
- In response to “*How would you rank your involvement in the Eastown business district,*” 35% of respondents stated they were “*Actively involved*” and 44% stated “*Nominally involved*.”
- In response to “*What’s going well in the Eastown business district,*” the most frequent comments involved:
  - Strong business growth and development, full commercial tenancy and increased foot traffic
  - Great neighborhood atmosphere
- In response to “*What needs to improve in the Eastown business district,*” the most frequent comments involved:
  - Concerns around parking and pedestrian safety
  - Desire for more district marketing, business involvement and special events

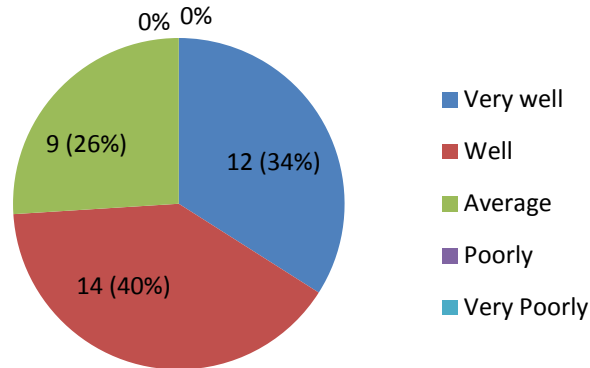
**1. How long have you been in business? (35 respondents)**



**2. What type of business do you own? (35 respondents)**



### 3. How would you say your business is performing? (35 respondents)

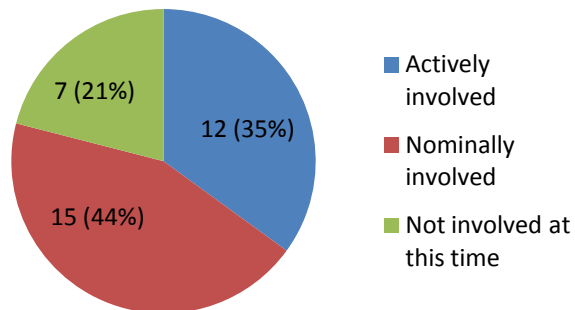


### 4. Where do you see your business in the next 5 years?

- Still here
- Staying Here and Growing
- Continuing
- We are in our 40th year now and no plans to stop.
- Growing, expanding and opening new locations
- Potentially adding a second location
- Double in size
- We are still in startup stages of business development. We hope our business will grow 10-fold in next three years.
- Showing increases every year for last 35 years, we hope to continue to expand in Craft Libation Industry as retailer.
- Constantly growing.
- Hopefully expanding
- Continued growth/expansion to a second location.
- Hopefully in a bigger space and with an online presence to reach a bigger audience.
- Same. Been here for 40 years
- Increasing
- Out growing our current space
- More stores
- I will probably have expanded my team by 4 people and possibly outgrowing our current space.

## 5. How would you rate your involvement in the Easttown business district? (34 respondents)

Theme	Comments
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## 6. Comments regarding respondents' involvement in the Easttown business district.

- Member only
- Member EBA and contributor to all special projects and support all voluntary assessments.
- We don't usually hear news from the Easttown Business Association about what they're working on, issues we should be aware of, infrastructure plans, etc.
- Very involved in EBA since 1999.
- Been involved in the Business Association and Community Association for many years and live in Easttown since 1976.
- EBA board member
- We always try to sponsor events and participate with them.
- my general manager is tasked with nine on a committee for the EBA right now. As a biz owner I've been involved in the leadership of other districts for years
- would like to get more involved in the marketing of Easttown aspect
- We donate to the ECA
- 1) would like to see the post office with "Easttown" sign on the side; 2) would like to see "bridge cards" available for sale that the merchants would honor for a small discount (that going to the EBA). They would be perfect as gifts, awards, etc.
- Growing a business has taken a lot of my time. As we grow I hope to be able to give more time to outside organizations.

<p>Strong business growth and development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Full occupancy</li> <li>- Increased foot traffic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic growth</li> <li>• Great new business development</li> <li>• Real estate market is strong. Lots of people want to live and shop in Eastown.</li> <li>• A strong Local First Community.</li> <li>• Population explosion, people still walk around the neighborhood.</li> <li>• Several new buildings for retail and living space. Property values going up. Sq ft rent rate going up.</li> <li>• Lots of foot traffic.</li> <li>• Eateries</li> <li>• The restaurants seem to be doing well.</li> <li>• Diverse, destination for restaurants, retail businesses, and professional services</li> <li>• There is a draw to Eastown for the unique shops</li> <li>• Local bars and shops</li> <li>• Great diversity.</li> <li>• Quality businesses</li> <li>• Restaurants seem to be doing well. It's not clear that other types of retail businesses are thriving.</li> <li>• More residential space</li> <li>• Lots of foot traffic in Eastown</li> <li>• Actual new residential units in Eastown</li> <li>• Increased investment in new and renovated buildings.</li> <li>• Bringing people to the business district having affordable space</li> <li>• Owner occupied homes and businesses.</li> <li>• Development is going very well in both business and residential arenas.</li> <li>• Development</li> <li>• And consistent business development.</li> <li>• Lots of foot traffic and more business coming in</li> <li>• Full commercial tenancy. No vacancies</li> <li>• Almost no commercial vacancies</li> <li>• Increased number of business and retail shops, and increased investment in the buildings.</li> <li>• The Eastown business district is full.</li> <li>• We are growing!</li> </ul>
<p>Great neighborhood atmosphere</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Great atmosphere</li> <li>• The Energy is great!</li> <li>• Cleanliness improving,</li> <li>• Great cohesive feel to the area</li> <li>• Bicycle friendly streets (if only drivers understood them).</li> <li>• Less crime then previous years</li> <li>• Walkability</li> </ul>
<p>Active business involvement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quarterly meetings and mixers</li> <li>• Very well organized- able to get capital improvements made-- signature events</li> <li>• Involvement in community events</li> </ul>

**7. What's going well in the Eastown business district?**

**8. What needs to improve in the Eastown business district?**

Theme	Comments
Concerns around parking and pedestrian safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PARKING</li> <li>• Traffic and Parking</li> <li>• Parking Availability of Public Parking and Pedestrian Crosswalks</li> <li>• Parking issues</li> <li>• Safety features at major crosswalks, eg traffic calming and pedestrian right of way</li> <li>• Pace growth to meet parking available parking</li> <li>• Parking and pedestrian safety</li> <li>• Reduce speed limit in the business district.</li> <li>• Free parking,</li> <li>• Parking</li> </ul>
Need for more marketing, business involvement and collaborative events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More advertising. Whether it's the business district or the individual shops. More should utilize social media.</li> <li>• Some type of EBA monthly/communication of new business, old business and general happenings.</li> <li>• We would like to see more consistent events that create more shopping traffic; such as gallery strolls or a consistent shop Eastown event such as Shop Hop. Should be a weekly or at least monthly incentive to draw people into this area. An event that is geared directly towards shopping. This would create traffic, energy, and revenue for shoppers, lounges and restaurants! :)</li> <li>• EBA sign is ugly more collective marketing as a district</li> <li>• More collaborating of special events with local businesses (1-2 unlikely businesses coming together to host a relevant event)</li> <li>• We seem to be improving very well. Perhaps a few more businesses joining the Business Association.</li> <li>• More business owner participation</li> <li>• Communication and organization</li> <li>• Greater notice of events- some notice seems last minute</li> </ul>
Improve infrastructure and streetscape, especially Wealthy Street	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wealthy St brick paving needs to be completely redone as it has been in the Wealthy Street Business District. Some of the bumps on the west end of the business district are terrible</li> <li>• Better streetscape, nicer lighting</li> <li>• Bars need to do a better job cleaning up litter and cigarette butts after closing. There's a lot of litter on sidewalks and streets after popular bar nights and weekends.</li> <li>• Wealthy Street the brick has to be done over people avoid driving on it The drains do not work properly there is a lot of standing water and nature's trash after a rain or wind storm If you can't find a company that stand behind it work than the brick wealthy has to change to asphalt</li> <li>• Infrastructure needs to improve paving the streets</li> </ul>
Business recruitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Niice to see some active recruitment of desirable retailers to fill some of the vacant/struggling retail spaces.</li> <li>• We would like to see more continuity in new businesses that open here. IE: things that work together/draw the same types of customers</li> </ul>
Increase security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improvement in safety during the evening.</li> <li>• More security</li> <li>• We need a bakery and a smallish food market with fresh fruit and veggies and other basic food stuffs.</li> </ul>
Miscellaneous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cheaper rent for business</li> <li>• Continued upgrades to the properties.</li> </ul>

### **Discussion questions for the Eastown Business Association**

- Were you surprised or disappointed by any of the responses from the survey? If so, why?
- What are some of your key take-aways from the survey responses?
- After considering the survey feedback, are there any follow-up steps or action items that you believe may be important for individual owners and/or your business association to pursue?